GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY
LOK SABHA

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Survey on Cyber Crime
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Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) Whether children are being subjected to threats on Internet in the country, if so, the details thereof;
(b) whether the children are becoming depressed due to such problems;
(c) if so, the details thereof;
(d) whether any steps are being taken or proposed to be taken by the Government in this regard; and
(e) if so, the details thereof?

Answer

(a), (b) and (c): The cyberspace is virtual, borderless and anonymous. The web infrastructure does not distinguish the nature of content. While Internet provides immense opportunity to school children, Society and other individuals for entertainment, information sharing, education programmes, communication, online gaming etc., certain elements in the society make use of unique characteristics of cyberspace to commit cyber crimes against the society, including children, by posting objectionable / obscene contents. These cyber crimes also include cyber bullying and cyber stalking. Besides this, the Children are exposed to harmful content on the net including explicit sexual material and video voyeurism. In view of the nature of cyber space and activities therein and with the introduction of new technologies, devices including smart phones /Tablets and innovative applications on such devices, the usage of cyberspace has rapidly increased in the society, there is a likelihood of increasing number of children ending up as victims of cyber crimes and abuse.

As per National Commission for Protection of Child Rights (NCPCR) and National Crime Records Bureau (NCRB), a total of 1, 3, 5 and 1 Cyber Child abuse cases have been registered in the country in the year 2012, 2013, 2014 and 2015 (till 30th November) respectively.

(d) and (e): In order to deal with the issues of cyber crimes, following measures are in place:

(i) The Information Technology Act 2000 together with the Indian Penal Code (IPC) provides legal framework for dealing with online obscene material including child sexual abuse. Sections 67, 67A and 67B of the Information Technology Act provide stringent punishment and fine for publishing or transmission of obscene material in electronic form. Similarly, the Protection of Children from Sexual Offences Act (POCSO) also deals with cyber related crimes against children.

(ii) Under sub-Section (2) of Section 79 of Information Technology Act 2000, the intermediaries including Internet Service Providers (ISPs) have a statutory obligation to observe due diligence and guidelines prescribed by the Government. The details of the due diligence to be observed by the intermediaries have been prescribed under the Information Technology (Intermediary Guidelines) Rules, 2011 enacted under Section 79 and notified on 13.04.2011. As per sub-Rule 3 (2) of the Rules as above, the intermediaries are required to take necessary action to inform the users not to host, display, upload, modify, publish, transmit, update or share any information which is objectionable in any way (including sexually explicit material). Government is in regular dialog with intermediaries including social networking sites for effective disablement of such objectionable content.

(iii) To enable responsible user behaviour and to promote cyber security and safety awareness, the Government has been implementing a programme on Information Security Education and Awareness (ISEA). One of the objective of the Project is to spread awareness on Information Security amongst various user groups including schools children. Under ISEA Project Phase I (2005-2014), approx. 596 workshops have been conducted which covered around 60000 school children / college students. During these workshops, approx. 50000 awareness kits containing awareness material/hand books were distributed. 50 posters on various topics related to information security awareness were designed and around 2 lakh posters were posted at different user locations including Schools.

(iv) Under ISEA Project Phase II also, Mass Awareness is being targeted towards different user groups including School children. Till date, around 195 workshops altogether have been conducted across the country and covered 6057 students including school children.

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